



INSIDE INDIA

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USAID Facilitates “King of Fruit” Farmers Federation

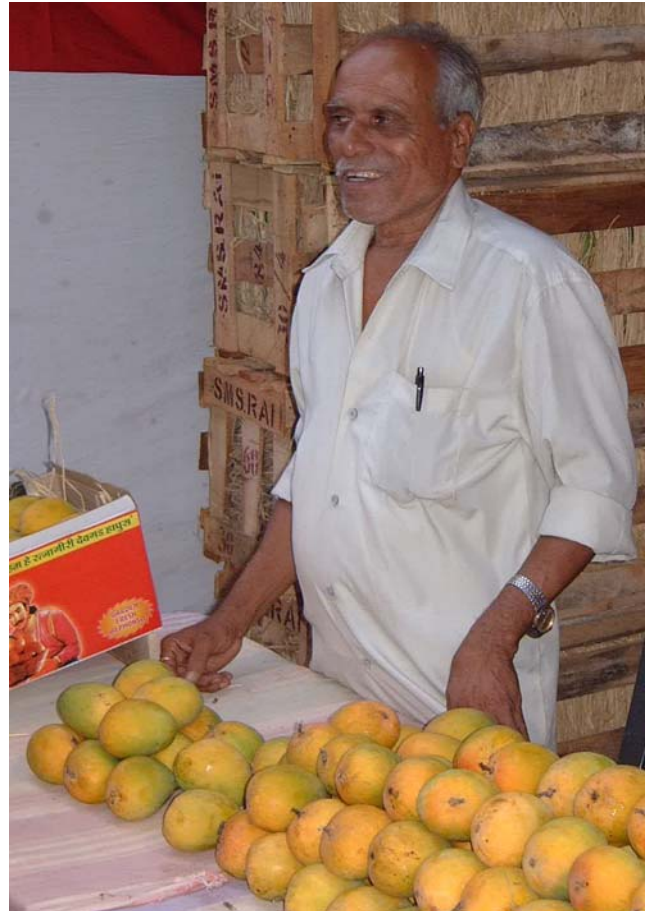
As the largest mango producer in the world, India cultivates 1000 varieties of the increasingly popular “King of Fruits.” Although Indian mangoes make up nearly half of global production, India is only the world’s third largest exporter.

Through a USAID-supported partnership between Michigan State (MS) and Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), experts worked with local family farms in southern India to establish a state-wide grower’s federation known as TAMAFED that has helped link small and medium scale mango farms into high value supply chains, resulting in increased profits. In the past, small mango producers were excluded from formal markets because they couldn’t meet strict public and industry standards for food safety and quality, achieve economies of scale, or sell their small mango yield to the larger companies that paid higher prices.

The USAID partnerships brought members of TAMAFED together with big buyers to discuss procurement standards and expectations in a transparent manner. As a result, local mango farmers who produce a combined total of 10-20,000 lbs of mangoes joined together and now have the power to bargain with buyers and processing industries for higher prices. They now exchange information about the markets and new technologies and are considering setting up a joint processing plant, packaging facility, or export unit. The federation can also lobby the state government to provide additional resources for training, processing, and storage that will benefit local farmers.

As a result of the Michigan State partnership local farmers associations now work with Tamil Nadu Agricultural University researchers to find out about daily pricing and market trends for their produce. Now over 2,000 local farmers have access to market information, and 700 farmers receive daily SMS messages about pricing that allow them to make decisions about when and where to sell their produce. The partnership also promoted on line spot trading that has allowed mango farmers to market their produce across India on a web-based system.

Mango Federation farmers report that their incomes significantly increased after they organized together and that they have benefitted from the technological innovations and access to market information.



Mango farmers significantly increased their revenues after forming a federation using the expertise and technical assistance provided through the Michigan State-Tamil Nadu Agricultural University partnership

Another USAID Project is a UN-HABITAT 'Good Practice'

The USAID supported Financial Institutions Reform and Expansion (FIRE-D) project was recently recognized as a 'Good Practice' by the UN-HABITAT *Best Practices and Local Leadership Programme*. Another USAID program, the Cross Cutting Agra Project (CAP), was similarly recognized (*Inside India* 2/17/2009) earlier in the year.

FIRE-D works with the Indian government at the national, state, and local levels to improve water and sanitation delivery systems – especially those that benefit the urban poor. To this end, FIRE-D: trains urban managers in proven methods for planning, improving and expanding urban infrastructure; develops financial management and accounting systems for urban governments to foster accountability and provide transparency; enhances public resource mobilization and tax administration; establishes mechanisms for pooling financial resources across public and private sectors and geographic regions; and improves the financial viability of cities to encourage private sector investment in infrastructure.

Since 1996, UN HABITAT has collected approximately 2,000 successful practices from around the world that are designed to improve governance, eradicate poverty, provide access to shelter, land and basic services, protect the environment, and support economic development. The practices are then put into a searchable database that others can learn from and incorporate into their own work. The *Best Practices Programme* also produces casebooks, engages in the transfer of knowledge and expertise, and often invites good and best practices to be showcased in conferences, seminars and training workshops. FIRE-D was recognized as a good practice in "Improving the Living Environment" in the water and sanitation category.

USAID Facilitates the Creation of a New HIV/AIDS Office in the Ministry of Women and Child Development

In an example of the benefits of partnership, the Government of India recently approved the establishment of an HIV/AIDS unit within the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD). Recognizing the importance of integrating HIV/AIDS into broader health programs, USAID and the MWCD, in partnership with UNICEF, UNIFEM, and the NGO Family Health International (FHI), having been working for more than a year to make the new unit a reality. As part of the new unit, USAID, through FHI, will be supporting a senior HIV/AIDS position in the MWCD.

This is a particularly important achievement because women and children account for a significant percentage of the estimated 3.1 million HIV positive people in India (39% are females and 3.5 % are children). While the MWCD is the agency responsible for developing the policies and programs that affect the welfare of women and children in the country, it is separate from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. At the same time, in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO) is focusing its HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support service efforts on the needs of women and children. To facilitate the mainstreaming of HIV/AIDS interventions and ensure an effective response to prevention and treatment of HIV among women, girls, and children, strong coordination was needed between the various responsible departments.

The new unit will be responsible for highlighting and addressing gaps in knowledge and management with respect to HIV/AIDS in the MWCD. The new unit will allow for better assessment and review of existing and proposed policies, guidelines and training curriculum for services, and allows officials to identify gaps and provide technical inputs to address the HIV/AIDS specific needs of women and children. It should also greatly enhance the coordination and referral mechanisms under the programs for women and children, ensuring that the MWCD will be working closely with their counterparts in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (including NACO) at the district, state, and national level to facilitate early detection, treatment and provision of medical and social services for women and children affected by HIV/AIDS.